

Message Text

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INFO AMCONSUL DURBAN

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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE CAPE TOWN 309

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS SOCI SF

SUBJ: SCHLEBUSCH COMMISSION REPORT EXPOSES " NEST OF INIQUITY"

REF: CAPE TOWN 307

1. THIRD INTERIM REPORT OF THE SCHLEBUSCH COMMISSION -- DEALING WITH ALLEGEDLY SUBVERSIVE AND LICENTIOUS ACTIVITIES OF THE NUSAS' LEADERSHIP PROGRAM AND WILGESPRUIT FELLOWSHIP CENTER, A SOUTH AFRICAN COUNCIL OF CHURCHES' (SACC) AFFILIATE -- WAS TABLED APRIL 25 DURING PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE ON PRIME MINISTER' S VOTE.

2. ACCORDING TO PRESS, MAIN POINTS OF REPORT ARE THAT WILGESPRUIT CENTER WAS WORKING TOWARDS RADICAL POLITICAL AND SOCIAL CHANGE IN SOUTH AFRICA, THAT IT SERVED AS TRAINING CENTER FOR POLITICAL ACTIVISTS, THAT IT WAS FINANCED ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY FROM OVERSEAS, THAT " SENSITIVITY TRAINING" COURSES AND RELIGIOUS SERVICES WERE MARKED BY " CRUDE SEXUALITY AND EROTICISM MIXED WITH BLASPHEMY". (PRESS ANALYSIS AND COPIES OF REPORT FOLLOW BY POUCH.)

3. TABLING OF REPORT ENABLED PM VORSTER TO MAKE HEADLINE-
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CATCHING DENUNCIATION OF PERMISSIVENESS AND REASSERT NATIONAL PARTY' S CLAIM TO BE THE DEFENDER OF NATIONA' S MORALS; HE GAVE SACC THREE WEEKS TO CLEAN UP WILGESPRUIT " NEXT OF INIQUITY". VORSTER WAS THUS ABLE TO BLUNT IMPACT OF OPPOSITION UNITED PARTY' S (UP) ATTACKS ON GOVERNMENT AND, DESPITE UP' S INITIAL REFUSAL DISCUSS REPORT BEFORE MEMBERS HAD TIME TO STUDY IT, TO TURN ATTENTION AWAY FROM INFLATION AND OTHER QUESTIONS EMBARRASSING TO SAG.

4. ONE- HUNDRED FIFTY- SIX PAGE REPORT IS LIKELY TO PROVIDE GRIST FOR POLITICAL MILL IN PARLIAMENT AND PRESS FOR SOME TIME TO COME. ON BASIS QUICK PERUSAL, PROGRESSIVE PARTY MP MRS. HELEN SUZMAN HAS DENOUNCED IT AS IRRELEVANT TO INTERNAL SECURITY AND AS PSEUDO- SCIENTIFIC NONSENSE. UP' S REACTION SHOULD BE INTERESTING SINCE UP MEMBERS OF SCHLEBUSCH COMMISSION SHARE RESPONSIBILITY FOR REPORT WHILE OTHER PARTY MEMBERS ARE KNOWN TO REGRET ITS SENSATIONALISM.

5. CHAIRMAN OF WILGESPRUIT FELLOWSHIP CENTER, K. A. FOSTER, HAS CHARACTERIZED CHARGES CONTAINED IN REPORT AS " MIXTURE OF HALF- TRUTHS, SECOND- HAND IMPRESSIONS AND CONTEXTUAL INACCURACIES."

6. COMMENT: DEFENSE OF WILGESPRUIT IS LIKELY TO BE DROWNED OUT BY GENERAL DISAPPROVAL OF NONCONFORMISTS BY PURITANNICAL WHITE SOUTH AFRICANS WHO BELIEVE FORMER ARE OPENING FLOOD GATES OF SIN AND COMMUNISM. PM VORSTER OBVIOUSLY KNOWS HIS PEOPLE AND IN SCHLEBUSCH COMMISSION HAS A POWERFUL POLITICAL WEAPON WITH WHICH TO OVERAWE OPPOSITION. HOWEVER, AFTER MONTHS OF OFFICIAL HINTS THAT SCHLEBUSCH COMMISSION WOULD MAKE STARTLING REVELATIONS OF SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITY, ON BASIS OF WHICH CHARGES COULD BE LAID AGAINST NUSAS AND OTHER ACTIVISTS, THIRD INTERIM REPORT APPEARS, FROM OBSERVERS' VIEWPOINT, TO BE LUDICROUS AND ANTICLIMATIC. IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN WHETHER COMMISSION HAS MATERIAL IN RESERVE FOR USE AGAINST INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANIZATIONS.
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